

The results are based on a survey of retail prescription drug prices in chain and independently-owned drug stores across my district. These prices were compared to the prices paid by the drug companies' most-favored customers.

For the 10 drugs cited above, the study found that the average difference between the price paid by a senior citizen and the price paid by an HMO was 98 percent, almost double the price for a senior citizen. Similar studies have recently been conducted by other Democratic Members in their districts, including the gentleman from Maine (Mr. TOM ALLEN), the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. JOHN TIERNEY), the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. TOM BARRETT), the gentleman from California (Mr. HENRY WAXMAN), and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. JIM TURNER). The average price differential of these studies combined is 108 percent.

With this in mind, I hasten to say that the high price of prescription drugs is not the fault of the pharmacist or the pharmacies. Pharmacies in fact have very small markups for prescription drugs, sometimes as low as 3 percent.

The problem is with large drug companies who drive up prices. Drugmakers whose annual profits top \$20 billion make six times more profit on prescription drugs than do retail pharmacists. It is no secret that greed is the driving force behind this problem. Because HMOs buy their drugs in bulk, manufacturers sell to HMOs at a discount, and then conveniently shift that cost to the drugmaker on the backs of our seniors.

Pharmacies, as to our seniors, have no real choice in the matter. Unfortunately, seniors, many of whom are on fixed incomes, are obviously the ones who suffer. As we all know, the later years of life often bring reduced incomes and higher health care costs. Few elderly can escape this dilemma. We have a responsibility to take steps to make medicine more affordable for older Americans.

I want to tell the story of one elderly woman who lives in Elyria, Ohio, in the county in which I live, and is a victim of this ongoing price discrimination. This woman, who asked to remain anonymous, is 67 years old. She suffers from poor eyesight, high blood pressure, and a number of other serious ailments. She takes 13 prescription medicines. Her only income is social security, which is roughly \$800 per month. While she has some insurance coverage, this woman's drug costs amount to almost 40 percent of her income. She said after she pays for her medicine, she has about \$20 to buy groceries for the whole month.

More tragically, she has had to begin reducing some of the dosages to save money. She is supposed to take four pills a day. She will cut them into half and take four half pills a day, for instance.

This situation is surely unacceptable. The bottom line is we need to take

steps to protect the elderly, who should not suffer this indignity. Our Nation's seniors should not bear the burden of paying for pharmaceutical company profits.

To address this issue head on, I signed on as an original cosponsor to a bill introduced by the gentleman from Maine (Mr. TOM ALLEN) to reduce the costs of prescription drugs for senior citizens. The Prescription Drugs Fairness for Seniors Act aims to protect senior citizens from drug price discrimination by making prescription drugs available to Medicare beneficiaries at the reduced price.

The bill achieves this by allowing pharmacies that serve seniors in Medicare to buy prescription drugs at the best market price available under the Federal supply schedule, which will reduce prescription drug prices for senior citizens by up to 50 percent.

An elderly person's well-being and quality of life are often determined by access to medicine prescribed by their doctor. This legislation directly addresses a problem we can no longer ignore. I urge my colleagues to act on behalf of the elderly and support this important measure, H.R. 4627.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SCARBOROUGH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

A TRIBUTE TO WAYZATA HEAD FOOTBALL COACH ROGER LIPELT UPON HIS RETIREMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. RAMSTAD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RAMSTAD. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a Minnesotan who represents the greatness and goodness that is America. I rise today to pay tribute to one of our State's top teachers and coaches who personifies Minnesota values. I rise today to pay tribute to my good friend of some 20 years, Coach Roger Lipelt of Wayzata High School.

Roger Lipelt, the highly successful head coach and outstanding teacher at

Wayzata the past 22 seasons, is retiring this year after a legendary career. Under Coach Lipelt, the Wayzata Football Trojans have won 204 games and 11 conference championships. His boys' tennis team won a State title several years ago.

Coach Roger Lipelt has received countless honors during his brilliant coaching career: Coach of the Year, Head Coach of the Minnesota All-Star Football Team, Hall of Fame selection by his alma mater, Hamline University, to name just a few.

Despite all the attention this legendary coach has drawn, if a stranger walks up to Roger Lipelt and asks him what he does, he will most likely say, "I am mainly a social studies teacher."

Yes, teaching is what Roger Lipelt is mainly about. Roger has taught all of his students and his athletes many valuable lessons about life, about winning and losing, about family and faith, about love of country and community, and about how to treat other people.

Through his inspirational leadership and by his example, Roger Lipelt has profoundly affected the lives of countless young people, and shown them the way to lead healthy and productive lives. Never give up on yourself, Roger Lipelt tells his students and his athletes. For 22 years, Roger's spirited coaching has made the Wayzata Football Trojans one of the most consistently successful football teams in the State of Minnesota, season after season.

Mr. Speaker, I have known Roger Lipelt, I am grateful to say, for two decades. I could tell the Members firsthand the power and the guidance he has brought to so many young people's lives. He has been a member for many years of a small Bible study group that I am part of. We meet every Saturday at a local restaurant in Wayzata. Members of our Saturday morning group have been truly blessed by Roger's friendship and his faith.

Above all, Roger Lipelt's life is about faith, family, and friends. Roger's love for his family is an inspiration to all of us who know him. Roger's wonderful wife, Jo, and their daughters Heidi, Heather, and Holly, have been Roger's biggest boosters, and have shown all of us the true meaning and the importance of family.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all those people whose lives Roger Lipelt has touched through the years, I am honored to stand here today to pay tribute to our Wayzata hero on his well-deserved retirement. We wish Roger and Jo Lipelt many more years of happiness together.

Congratulations, Coach, on a great career, and thanks for all the memories. Thanks, also, Coach, for putting the ball in the air.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE) is recognized for 5 minutes.